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Human rights situation in Palestine and other occupied Arab territories

Written submission by the Independent Commission for Human Rights of the State of Palestine*

Note by the Secretariat

The Secretariat of the Human Rights Council hereby transmits the communication submitted by the Independent Commission for Human Rights of the State of Palestine**, reproduced below in accordance with rule 7(b) of the rules of procedures described in the annex to Council resolution 5/1, according to which participation of national human rights institutions is to be based on arrangements and practices agreed upon by the Commission on Human Rights, including resolution 2005/74 of 20 April 2005.

* National human rights institution with A status accreditation from the Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions.
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Annex

Submission by the Independent Commission for Human Rights of the State of Palestine

Latest updates on the Israeli Violations of Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories

June 2018 marked 51 years of Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. Since then and on a daily basis, the Israeli occupying authorities have systematically carried out arbitrary policies, offences and violations against Palestinian human rights and International Humanitarian Law principles. Since the beginning of 2018, multiple violations have been committed, including continued killings, targeted shooting of Palestinians, restriction of freedoms, and damage of properties in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

By early June 2018, a total of 156 Palestinians were killed by the Israeli occupying forces in both west bank and Gaza strip. in the besieged Gaza Strip, the Israeli occupying forces committed the crime of killing Razan Ashraf al-Najjar, a 21-year-old female volunteer paramedic, while carrying out her humanitarian duties towards injured citizens east of Gaza strip. In addition to Razan al-Najar and since the start of the Great March of Return on 30 March 2018, the Israeli occupying forces have killed a Civil Defence paramedic and injured 234 health workers. This is an evidence of the Israeli systematic policy of targeting health workers, who carry out their humanitarian duties in the Gaza Strip. The Israeli occupying forces have used lethal and excessive force against peaceful protestors, who posed no immediate threat to the lives of Israeli soldiers. Attacks on health workers and targeting civilians constitute a grave violation of International Law and International Humanitarian Law. They amount to a war crime under the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention, particularly in relation to the scope of protection it provides to civilians.

Journalists also have not been spared. The Israeli occupying forces killed photojournalists Yasser Murtaja and Ahmed Abu Hussein and left 63 other journalists with various wounds, including 20 by live ammunition. Of these, a journalist had his leg amputated. Strikingly, the Israeli occupying forces have deliberately targeted media representatives to supress the media, impose censorship and prevent news coverage of ongoing events in the Gaza Strip. Israel prevents media staff from carrying out their professional duties.

The unarmed civilians in the Great March of Return have continued been targeted. Israel's use of excessive force and unjustified violence against protestors resulted in the killing of 104 civilians, including 15 children and two persons with disabilities. A total of 5587 civilians were injured, including 927 children and 167 women.

In the West Bank, arbitrary detention and deprivation of liberty continued. the Israeli occupying forces arrested at least 2,713 citizens and detained dozens of others. the Israeli forces raided Palestinian cities towns and villages 2.852 times and demolished 33 homes. In 292 incidents, the Israeli forces attacked, damaged and seized Palestinian properties. Across the West Bank, 25 Palestinian homes were occupied and converted into military posts. The Israeli forces also set up 1,686 permanent and flying checkpoints, restricting the movement of civilians. Additionally, Israeli settlers committed acts of violence on 216 occasion.

At the same time, the Israeli High Court ruled for the demolition of the entire Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin community east of occupied Jerusalem, including the community's mosque and school. The residents are now at heightened risk of forcible transfer, in the context of Israeli attempts to connect Ma'ale Adumim settlement to occupied Jerusalem and expand Jerusalem municipal border at the expense of Palestinians which constitutes a war crime. 41

families, including 180 members, of the Al-Jahalin tribe live in Khan al-Ahmar Bedouin community. the community's school serves about 170 male and female pupils from five surrounding communities.

The Israeli policies, which involve replacing Palestinian citizens by Israeli settlers in the (oPt), arbitrary destruction of property and forcible transfer stand in grave violation of the 1949 Fourth Geneva Convention. They constitute war crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court. Against this background, ICHR calls for an immediate action by the Human Rights Council and international community to bear their legal and moral responsibilities and put an end this dangerous plan, which serves settlement activity in oPt.

The occupying Power's extensive abuses are a result of impunity and lack of accountability which encourage the Israeli forces to perpetrate more crimes. Continued crimes and excessive use of force against peaceful protestors, that are supported by a decision from the highest military and political levels, require an investigation, with a particular focus on protected groups. It also requires that the High Contracting Parties to the Fourth Geneva Convention fulfil their legal obligation under Article 1 of the Convention (undertake to respect and to ensure respect for the Convention), and Article 146 (prosecute persons alleged to have committed grave breaches of the Convention).

ICHR calls for holding the occupying Power accountable for the war crimes it has committed. All those involved, including persons alleged to have committed or to have ordered to be committed such crimes, should be prosecuted and held accountable. The statute of limitation shall not apply in respect of war crimes. ICHR also calls for taking prompt action to establish the International Commission of Inquiry according to the Human Rights Council's Resolution and investigate the crimes perpetrated by the Israeli occupying forces against unarmed civilians in the Great March of Return. Occupation is a. Ending the occupation, the major cause of the deteriorating situation of human rights, will put an end to the Palestinian people's suffering, including grave breaches of their fundamental right to life, right to an adequate standard of living, right to self-determination, and right to their independent state on their national soil.